

What we claim is:

1 *Sub* 1. A method of searching for records included in a database  
2 *a* provided in a computer network, the network having a plurality of  
3 reception systems at which respective users can request the records,  
4 the method comprising the steps of:  
5 a. providing record locators indexed to record identifiers;  
6 b. arranging the locators in a plurality of groups to define  
7 subsets of the database records;  
8 c. designating the respective locator groups by code;  
9 d. generating an locator group code in response to a record  
10 request so that a group of record locators may be presented at the  
11 reception system and a locator selected which enables identification  
12 of the record and facilitates its retrieval.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein providing the record locators  
2 includes setting the locators as mnemonics that are indexed to  
3 designation which identify the record corresponding to the locator in  
4 the database.

1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein arranging the locators in groups  
2 includes arranging the locator mnemonics in tables in which the  
3 respective mnemonics are indexed to the record identifiers.

1 4. The method of claim 3 wherein designating the respective  
2 locator groups by code includes arranging the codes as alphabetically  
3 sequenced character strings such that when a character sequence is  
4 entered at a reception system to designate a requested record, a  
5 locator table may be provided at the reception system from which a  
6 group of record identifiers may be selected.

1 5. The method of claim 4 wherein providing record locators  
2 includes arranging the locators as keywords and wherein the character  
3 sequence entered at the reception system to designate a requested  
4 records may be generated with a plurality of search strategies.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the records sought to be  
2 identified are interactive applications associated with an interactive  
3 service, and wherein the applications are arranged to be generated  
4 from objects.

1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein providing locator keywords  
2 indexed to record identifiers includes setting the identifiers as  
3 object identifications.

1 8. The method of claim 6 wherein entering the character sequence  
2 at the reception system with a plurality of search strategies includes  
3 entering the sequence based on a description of the application  
4 desired.

1 9. The method of claim 6 wherein entering the character sequence  
2 with a plurality of search strategies includes entering the sequence  
3 based on a selection of the desired application from an alphabetical  
4 listing.

1 10. The method of claim 6 wherein entering the character sequence  
2 with a plurality of search strategies includes entering the sequence  
3 based on a selection of the desired application from a listing by  
4 subject category.

1 11. A method of searching for application included as records in  
2 an interactive service database stored in a computer network, the  
3 network having a plurality of reception system at which respective  
4 users can request applications, and the applications being made up of  
5 objects collectively containing presentation data and program  
6 instructions, the method comprising the steps of:

7 a. preparing a plurality of tables each having various  
8 application identifiers referenced to respective keywords so that each  
9 table represents a predetermined subset of the applications stored  
10 in the service database;

11 b. providing each table with a unique coding;

12 c. generating a table code in response to a query for an

13 application entered at the reception system;  
14 d. comparing the table code generated with the available  
15 table codings to select a table suited to the query;  
16 e. transmitting the table to the reception system at which  
17 the query was entered; and  
18 f. processing the table identified applications at the  
19 reception system where the query was entered.

1 12. The method of claim 11 wherein preparing the tables includes  
2 representing the applications by referring to the objects that make  
3 up the respective applications, and wherein the coding of the tables  
4 includes supplying one or more letters in combination to identify each  
5 table.

1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein generating the table code  
2 identifiers includes receiving a query for applications in one of a  
3 plurality of different procedures and translating one or more of the  
4 different procedures into a single common procedure for generating the  
5 table code, the table code including one or more letters in  
6 combination to uniquely identify an application table.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the generating of the table  
2 codes includes receiving a query from the user for an application with  
3 a procedure selected for the group of procedures consisting of  
4 selection by character string, alphabetical listing and category  
5 listing.

1 15. The method of claim 14 wherein the processing of table  
2 identified applications includes collecting at the reception system  
3 the objects which make up the application associated with the  
4 identified table, and executing the objects so as to present the  
5 corresponding text and graphic data for review.